



Housing Commission

October 10, 2022

Mayor Himmelrich and City Council Members
City of Santa Monica
1685 Main Street,
Santa Monica, CA 90401

Re: Item 11A. Adoption of Resolution Amending the 6th Cycle (2021-2029) Housing Element to the City's General Plan and Approval of Addendum to the Final Environmental Impact Report for the 6th Cycle (2021-2029) Housing Element

Dear Mayor Himmelrich, Mayor Pro Tempore McCowan, and City Councilmembers,

The Housing Commission recently became aware that the Housing Element is still in the revision process and has been since approximately 8 February 2022, when HCD rejected the 6th Cycle (2021-2029) Housing Element. However, the Housing Commission has not been informed of this, despite the fact that the Housing Commission is tasked with advising the City Council on all matters related to housing in Santa Monica, particularly affordable housing.

Despite numerous requests of staff by multiple Commissioners over many months, the Housing Commission was never informed of the Housing Element's ongoing review process, nor were we given an opportunity to participate in it. Bringing this document to our attention is the responsibility of our affiliated city department staff. However, again, despite repeated requests by multiple housing commissioners, city housing staff has failed to bring a single substantive administrative item to the Housing Commission agenda in all of 2022. This failure was brought to the City Council and city staff previously with no response or remedy.

HCD's letter dated 8 February 2022 states the following:

"Public participation in the development, adoption, and implementation of the housing element is essential to effective housing planning. Throughout the housing element process, the City should continue to engage the community, including organizations that represent lower-income and special needs households and commenters on this review,



by making information regularly available and considering and incorporating comments where appropriate.”

HCD’s letter dated 6 September 2022 states the following:

“Public participation in the development, adoption, and implementation of the housing element is essential to effective housing planning. Throughout the housing element process, the City must continue to engage the community, including organizations that represent lower-income and special-needs households, by making information regularly available while considering and incorporating comments where appropriate. Please be aware, any revisions to the element must be posted on the local government’s website and to email a link to all individuals and organizations that have previously requested notices relating to the local government’s housing element at least seven days before submitting to HCD.”

In light of this direction by HCD and the city’s failure to include key stakeholder representatives, including the Housing Commission, in this review process, the Housing Commission strongly recommends that the Santa Monica City Council do one of two things:

1. Delay approving the final revised 6th Cycle (2021-2029) Housing Element until the Housing Commission can adequately review it and provide feedback.
2. If its approval cannot or will not be delayed, attach this letter as a comment by the Santa Monica Housing Commission to the final approved 6th Cycle (2021-2029) Housing Element that will be submitted to HCD by 15 October 2022.

Thank you in advance for your attention to and consideration of the Housing Commission’s urgent request. Our full and timely participation in the review of the 6th Cycle (2021-2029) Housing Element is crucial to ensuring representation of all Santa Monicans in the creation and revision of city housing plans.

Sincerely,

Michelle Gray
Chair, Santa Monica Housing Commission
On behalf of the Santa Monica Housing Commission